

Notes on *Durational Performance*

Durational performance is a form through which TIME is manifested in its original (natural) purity and brought to the forefront as pivotal to the experience. The performance is designed so that time, as the primary theme of the piece, physically affects and mentally transforms the performer, the audience, and the space.

Durational performance challenges audiences' habitual patterns of full consumption of cultural products. The length of a durational performance exceeds the average standard length of most performing arts and film events: approximately 2 hours. Therefore, there is a transgression of consumerism (our passive but entitled, short attention spanned, consumer identity), in terms of: the work's length (duration), speed (slowness), silence, observation (perception), introspection, immateriality, and lack of entertainment.

And then, there is the reclamation of time... Western urban daily life is organized in blocks of intense work, relaxing leisure, and hurried neutral space in-between. A durational performance is like a sugar cube dissolving in water; like ice melting on a summer day; like watching a flower wilt; like following the life of a butterfly. **It makes time visible**, challenging our hurry. It extricates time from the human construct. It presents time from the point of view of nature.

Durational performance can be considered a cultural pause from the nine-to-five urban routine; a break for reflection on existence.

Paraphrased and expanded by E. Pujol from *Challenging Smooth Consumption: Durational Performance as Cultural Misfit*, a panel chaired by Kim Skjoldager-Nielsen, University of Copenhagen, 2009